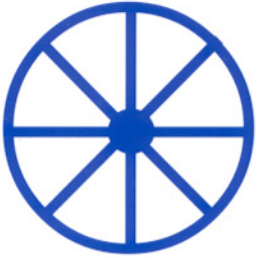




Guide to Improving Communications



Prevention
Through
People



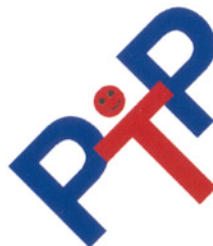
The process of communications can be described as a wagon wheel: you and your information are at the center (the hub), the spokes are the various paths of communication available, and the rim is the audience you are trying to reach. And like all wagon wheels, the wheel of communication often has temporary patches where breaks have occurred and so it doesn't always roll as smoothly as it could.

Feedback from Coast Guard field units and industry has indicated that communications in relation to Prevention Through People (PTP)/human element information can be improved. Through surveys, you pointed out many positive examples of effective PTP communications efforts. You also raised valuable questions about PTP and information sharing efforts - the breaks in the spokes and the rim of our communication wheel.

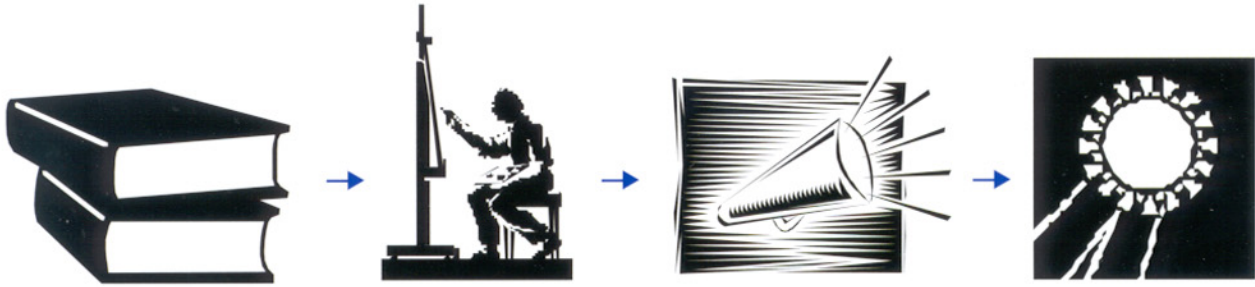
This Guide addresses how to repair those breaks with stronger, more effective communication tools. It gives you an informal four-part communications process and informative job aids and databases. Getting the right information to the right people - improving *how* and *what* we communicate - is the major objective of this Guide.



The communication of PTP information was chosen because the human element has been identified as the dominant cause of marine casualties. The PTP approach of focusing attention and efforts on the human element has been incorporated as one of the key strategies for achieving M Business Plan goals. For PTP to function effectively, it requires a high degree of communicating and sharing information. It is to support this need that the Guide has been developed. Use this Guide to share your information and examples, for it is only by sharing and communicating information that all of us can achieve the greatest benefit and keep the wheel of communication rolling smoothly.



The Communications Process





GATHER CREATE MARKET SUPPORT

The communications process can be broken down into four phases - Gather, Create, Market, Support. This process applies to major projects such as investigations, reports and briefings as well as less defined activities such as working with industry, solving problems and sharing information with other Coast Guard groups. It is *not* intended to add more time. Rather, it is a way to more effectively perform the work you already do in order to maximize benefits. We all have important information that's useful to others. Knowing how to access and share this information - *without creating extra hassle* - is the primary goal of this Guide.

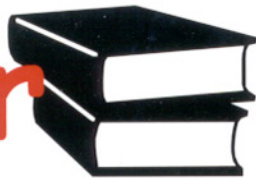
Each of the four phases requires both a review of your previous steps and the recognition of how your current step will work with the following ones. There's a larger list for the first phase - this is intentional. Early preparations help you define the process and keep you organized. This makes it easier to share the information. It also helps you to see the whole picture at an early stage so you can avoid duplication of efforts, last minute mix-ups, and other unexpected complications.

In developing this Guide, we have assembled a series of materials to make communications easier and more effective. These materials are represented by the symbols below.

 = Refers to specific databases that have been created for this Guide (see inside back cover for more information on access to these databases).

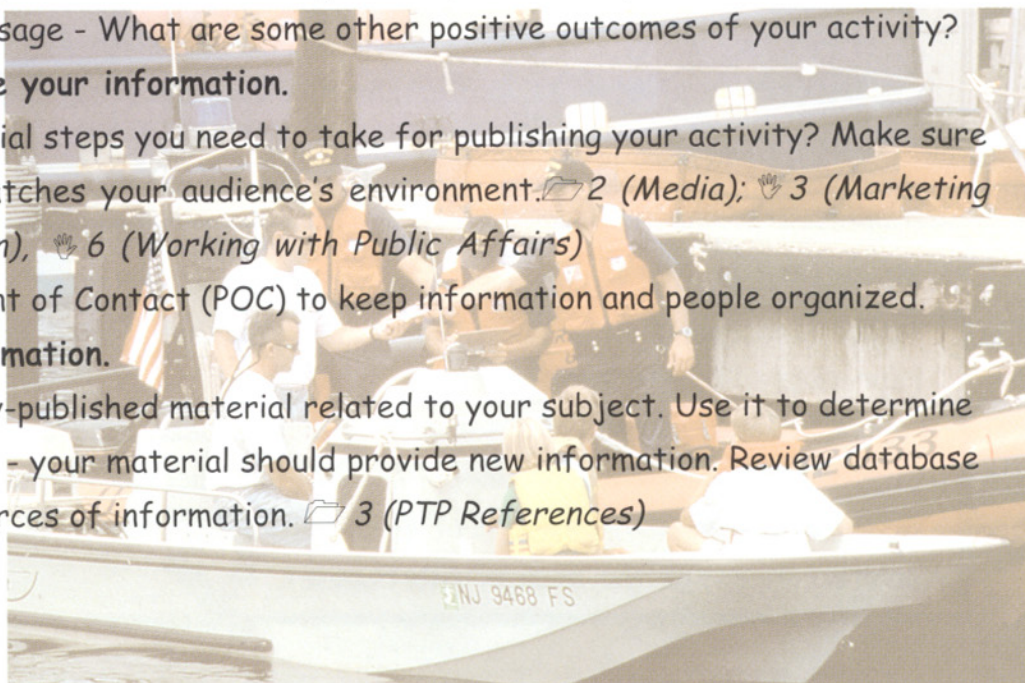
 = Refers to additional tips of information that can be found on the colored sheets at the back of this booklet.

Gather



This is the first phase of all projects and activities (both referred to here simply as 'activities'). It's where you define your activity, goals and desired outcome. You should gather information *and* people. While the process outlined is formal, your implementation doesn't need to be. Thinking it through in your head and jotting down a few notes may be all that is needed.

- ✓ **Have a goal.**
 - > What do you intend to accomplish with this activity?
- ✓ **State your purpose.**
 - > What is the reason for doing this activity that will contribute toward your goal?
- ✓ **Find partners.**
 - > Are there people with similar activity interests? Use their skills and information to guide your activity. 📁 1 (*HQ M Divisions*); 🖐 1 (*Finding Industry Demographics*)
- ✓ **Define your audience.**
 - > Figure out who you're talking to and how you need to relay your information to meet that group's needs. 🖐 2 (*Identifying Your Audience*)
- ✓ **Determine your messages.**
 - > Primary message - What is the main point of your activity?
 - > Secondary message - What are some other positive outcomes of your activity?
- ✓ **Decide how to promote your information.**
 - > Are there special steps you need to take for publishing your activity? Make sure your material matches your audience's environment. 📁 2 (*Media*); 🖐 3 (*Marketing Your Information*), 🖐 6 (*Working with Public Affairs*)
 - > Establish a Point of Contact (POC) to keep information and people organized.
- ✓ **Research/Collect information.**
 - > Look at already-published material related to your subject. Use it to determine where gaps exist - your material should provide new information. Review database of reference sources of information. 📁 3 (*PTP References*)



Create



This second phase involves the creation of materials based on the information you've gathered. Most important at this phase is to continually keep in mind *who* your audience is and the reason *why* you are doing this activity.

- ✓ **Review reasons for doing this activity.**
 - > What reasons do certain groups have for supporting your area of activity?
 - > What reasons do certain groups have for *not* supporting your area of activity?
- ✓ **Determine appropriate materials.**
 - > What media type (such as web sites, handout materials and speeches) is most appropriate for your audience? Take into account *why* they will be using this information and *how* they will use it.
- ✓ **Examine the production possibilities.**
 - > The design and layout for materials are different depending on how they are produced. Knowing the requirements before actually creating the materials can save a lot of time. 🖱 4 (*Printing Through GPO*), 🖱 5 (*Designing a Web Site*)
 - > Can you distribute the materials yourself, or do you also need to involve other groups? 📁 2 (*Media*), 🖱 6 (*Working with Public Affairs*)
- ✓ **Format information.**
 - > Work with partners to develop material.
- ✓ **Distribute draft material.**
 - > This gives others a chance to contribute and it also promotes your activity.
- ✓ **Finalize material.**



Market



Once you've created the materials for your activity, you need to market it to the right people. Make sure your material makes sense. A good product explains itself clearly - people want to know why the activity is important and how it affects them. Answer their questions in your marketing approaches. Alter your approaches for different audiences so your activity and its materials apply distinctly to each group. How you present it can have a lot to do with its success.

✓ Provide a Point of Contact (POC).

✓ Develop promotional materials.

> If your activity requires wide publicity, consider presenting your information through a number of different approaches (such as speeches, expositions and mass mailings). 🖐 3 (*Marketing Your Information*)

✓ Pass out materials.

> A "publicity package" that clearly explains itself can help reach a wide audience.

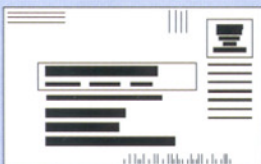
✓ Publicize your activity.

> Submit material to a Coast Guard Public Affairs Office and to trade journals.

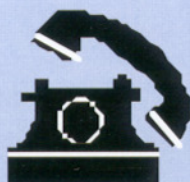
🖐 6 (*Working with Public Affairs*), 🖐 7 (*Using Publications*)

> Pass information to other Coast Guard offices and industry through day-to-day contacts and co-workers on travel.

Some Methods of Communications



- * Letters
- * Mass mailings



- * Phone calls



- * Articles
- * Newsletters
- * Press Releases
- * Safety Alerts



- * Conferences
- * Industry Days
- * Seminars



- * Word-of-mouth



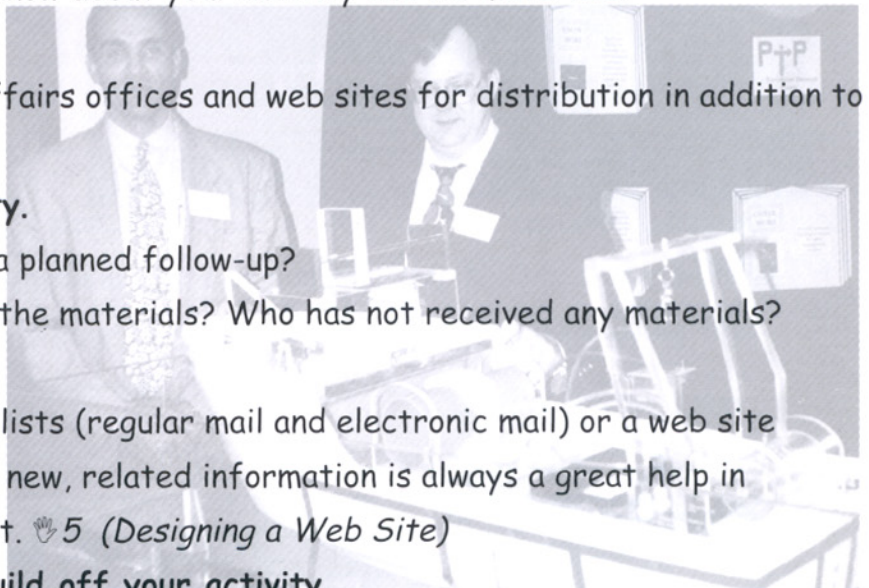
- * Web sites
- * Email

Support



A major problem with many activities is that they seem to disappear quickly. Some activities are created for such short-term solutions, but many are created with the intention of a longer existence. These often fail because they lack continuing support. Publicizing your follow-up is important for these activities. Your original audience needs to see that you still endorse the activity, and new target audiences need to see the activity in use.

- ✓ **Provide list of materials available.**
 - › Let interested parties know about your activity and its materials.
- ✓ **Provide copies of material.**
 - › Consider using Public Affairs offices and web sites for distribution in addition to regular mailings.
- ✓ **Track the path of your activity.**
 - › Does the activity need a planned follow-up?
 - › Who is receiving the materials? Who has not received any materials?
- ✓ **Identify possible next steps.**
 - › The creation of mailing lists (regular mail and electronic mail) or a web site where people can look for new, related information is always a great help in keeping an activity current. 🖱️ 5 (*Designing a Web Site*)
- ✓ **Look into opportunities that build off your activity.**
 - › Are there conferences or other forums where you can present your activity (local industry days, site visits, etc)?
 - › Are there other groups (Coast Guard and industry) that are interested in starting an activity similar to yours?



Finding Industry Demographics

(🖐️ #1)

By making industry partners in advancing marine safety goals, you include their wealth of experience, resources and understanding. This will help with "industry buy-in" - they'll be contributing *their* solutions. Below is a starter list of various marine demographic groups and organizations. This should provide you with a start in identifying industry groups that might be interested in your activities. Refer to 🖐️ 7 for demographic trade journals.

Academies/Schools	Freighters	Passenger Vessels
Army Corps of Engineers	Harbor Associations	Passengers
Bulkers	Industry Associations	Petrochemical Vessels
Car Carriers	Insurance Companies	Pilot Associations
Chandlers	Integrated Tug & Barge	Port Authorities
Charter Fishing Vessels	Licensed Mariners	Professional Organizations
Charterers	LNG Carriers	Regional Organizations
Chief Engineers	Local Authorities	Repair Yards
Citizens' Groups	Marine Engineers	Research Vessels
Class Societies	Masters	Reserve Fleets
Coast Guard	MODU/Platform Operators	RoRo Operators
Commercial Fishing	National Oceanic and Atmospheric	Sailing Schools
Container Ships	Association (NOAA)	Salvage Companies
Cruise Ships	National Organizations	Ship Agents
Dinner Cruise Boats	Naval Architects	Shipyards
Dredges	Oil Companies	Shore Facilities
Dry Cargo Vessels	Operators	State Authorities
Environmental Groups	Offshore Supply Vessels	Suppliers
Ferry Boats	Owners	Support Staff
Fish Processors	P&I Clubs	Terminal Operators
		Towing Vessels
		Training Facilities
		Tug Companies
		Unions
		Unlicensed Mariners



Identifying Your Audience

(🖐️ #2)

Identifying your audience is an extremely important part of sharing information. By focusing your activity and its materials to a specific group, you provide that group with information that is directly usable by them. The presentation of the material must match the level and purpose of the audience.

Who is going to use your material?

> Different groups focus on different parts of the same activity. For example, material that goes to company presidents invariably must be different than the material that goes to ship deckhands. Because of this, you may have to create different materials to explain the same activity.

> To help narrow a large group into a more focused audience, look for similarities among people such as job positions, education/experience level, professional interests and geographic location.



How it is going to be used?

> One activity often includes multiple parts of information: technical, promotional, regulatory, advisory, etc. Identify how your targeted group is going to be viewing the material so you can highlight their focus areas.

What material it is going to be used with?

> Explain how your activity and its material fit in with information that they are currently using. This connection will help your audience more successfully include your material into their work.

Marketing Your Information

(🖐️ #3)

Once you've identified your audience, it's important to know *how* you're going to present your information to them. There are a variety of ways to do this, and most activities usually require a combination of presentations. Don't be afraid to alter your material to fit the needs of different groups.

Where are you presenting the activity and its materials?

- > Trade shows and expositions are ideal places to reach a large group of people, but make sure your material is eye-catching. Use creative display booths to get people's attention, and have interesting material available to take with them. Keep in mind that a trade show is not the place to introduce a lengthy, text-heavy report. Colorful brochures with highlights of the most important information are much more likely to be picked up and read. You can provide them with contact information such as a web site for more detailed information.

- > Small group presentations allow you more direct time with your audience to explain your activity. A combination of text reports and graphics handouts are a successful mix - it provides them with the technical information and visually shows them how it works and/or how it applies to other activities. Such presentations can be used during company visits (at office sites and on vessels), board meetings, community events and service organizations.

- > Inviting industry segments to your office allows you to present your activity in a familiar environment. This is sometimes necessary for product demonstrations, and it's a great opportunity to show your visitors other activities and highlights within your office.

How are you going to reach your audience?

- > Check trade journals, local newspapers, union newsletters and other written publications to see if your targeted audience is already identified.

- > Is the computer (for email and/or web sites) a realistic option? If so, submit your material to related web sites and newsgroups. Email is a quick and easy source for passing along material to large groups.

- > Drop off packets of your material at information sites such as local libraries, community centers, union halls, marinas, port facilities and visitors bureaus. Hand out the material yourself during inspections and meetings.

Printing Through GPO

(#4)

The Government Printing Office (GPO) is your best printing source when materials get too large for the office copier. For more information on how GPO can help you, check the GPO graphics support web site at: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/procurement/ditsg/>

Where to pay attention: Price, Quality, Time:

Price: There are many ways to keep the cost down, including using common paper sizes, colors and page totals (multiple page documents should have a total page count divisible by 4) - check with your local GPO for specifics and ask for cost estimates.



Most of the cost is spent on paper and in the printer set-up. Increasing the quantity often decreases the cost per copy, so consider getting quotes for three different quantities.

Quality: GPO has five quality levels of printing: Level I is the highest quality; Level V is the lowest. Levels II (recruiting materials, illustrated professional papers, promotional pieces) and III (annual reports, general process color work, catalogs) are the most common. Asking for proofs allows you to see a product before it is actually printed and make corrections if necessary.



Time: As the saying goes, *time is money* - the less time a client allows for a product to be printed, the more it is going to cost. One month is average for *print* jobs (pamphlets, brochures, booklets, posters - items with color). One to two weeks is average for *duplicating* jobs (black and white copy jobs).



To include for a *Printing Request*: (forms available in SWSIII JetForm Filler)

1. GPO Form 952 (Desktop Publishing - Disk Information)
Sample can be found at: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/procurement/ditsg/952hlp.pdf>
2. DOT Form 1700.3 (Printing, Binding, Distribution and Editorial Services Request)
3. Paper copy of final product (referred to as the "visual")
4. Disk - Include only what is needed for that specific printing job and provide fonts

To include for a *Duplicating Request*: (form available in SWSIII JetForm Filler)

1. Original document (referred to as the "visual" or "hard copy")
2. DOT Form 1700.8 (Duplicating Request)

Designing a Web Site

(#5)

The Internet or World Wide Web (WWW) is a very powerful tool for exchanging information. It can provide a great opportunity to open up the processes of the Coast Guard to the public. In addition, it provides a "self-serve" source for your materials that can dramatically reduce time and reproductions. Because of this you will want to make sure that you provide plenty of opportunity for people to ask questions and even share their experiences. To build a web site - or add to an existing one - you first need to decide:

Why are you developing a web site? What is the purpose of the web site?

Who is your audience? Who do you want your audience to be?

What will be on your web site? What is appropriate to share with the public?

How much time will you have available to develop and update the web site? A static web site is a site that will not be visited.

Basic Design Tips:

- > It's easier to read dark text on a light background, and if the text contrasts with the background.
- > Decide on a single-color scheme for your text and background to provide a consistent look. You can test the visibility of your text/background combination at the "216 Color Guide" at <http://itd.rrpc.com/clrguide/>
- > Limit graphics. Besides taking up storage space and download time, too many graphics can be distracting.
- > Test out your page on different systems prior to releasing it to the general public. What you develop to look great on Internet Explorer may not show up at all on Netscape. Make sure that the broadest number of browsers can understand the colors you choose.
- > Ensure that your web page conforms to applicable Coast Guard policy. COMDINST 5230.56 provides policy governing the worldwide web and COMDTINST 5230.57 provides Coast Guard Intranet (CGWEB) policy. Districts, Areas, and Maintenance and Logistics Commands have authority to establish further web guidance that might apply to you.
- > Have someone not involved with your project review your site. You may be using terminology or navigation features familiar to you but unknown to others.

Working with Public Affairs

(#6)

Public Affairs Officers are a key resource for gathering, using and distributing information. They are the Coast Guard's media and community relations experts. Their purpose is to help you get your information to the largest, most applicable audience. Public Affairs is one of your best opportunities for easily spreading information to the public and with each other.

What do Public Affairs Officers do?

- > Serve as spokespeople for the Coast Guard - respond to press calls, requests for speakers and interactions between members of the Coast Guard and the public.
- > Coordinate public affairs plans and guidance when situations are sensitive or of national significance.
- > Write, edit and format information for article use in various publications, issue press releases and media advisories; provide photo support.
- > Promote and maintain an active community relations program.

How do you contact them?

There is no formal process for getting information to Public Affairs. There is a Public Affairs Office at Coast Guard Headquarters; Field offices should contact the District or Unit Public Affairs Officer. Keep in mind that all material (especially Press Releases) needs to be cleared through the proper program area *before* you give it to Public Affairs for release. The program areas are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the substance of the information. Public Affairs then edits and puts it in the appropriate format for a release.

When should you issue a Press Release or Media Advisory?

Public Affairs is one of your strongest links to the maritime community, the general public, the media and other Coast Guard offices. They can help you educate the public about your activities. If you're questioning whether a piece of information is "noteworthy enough" to be sent to Public Affairs, simply call them up and ask. Press Releases and Media Advisories cover a large range of topics, to include: announcements of new regulations, changes of command, search and rescue operations, local and regional Industry Days and much more.

Using Publications


(#7)

The best reason for submitting material to publications is that they've already identified whom your audience is and how to get hold of them. All you have to do is give the publications the information for them to pass on. Submitting information to these publications guarantees that you will reach a great portion of your audience - provided that you do the research on the publication first. In choosing which publications to submit to - and which ones to read - keep in mind not just the right *sector of industry* (such as commercial fishing, tugs and barges, tankers) but also the right *level of people* (such as managers, deckhands, the general public).

Sharing Information

Most publications are eager to publicize helpful information - their goal is to share information to as many people as possible. Safety suggestions, improved equipment, new regulations, a change of command - all of these are great topics for you to submit.

> Trade Journals

Trade journals are an excellent source for sharing information and learning about activities from other groups in your area (geographic and functional). Use them to find out about upcoming conventions - another great place to showcase big ideas to mariners. To identify journals that focus on your audiences, ask local marine industries what they subscribe to or check the local libraries. You can also look at  2 (*Media*) for a listing of some maritime industry journals. If you are submitting an article, call the journal and ask for their "Author's Guidelines." These describe article requirements such as length, style, photo and graphic options and submissions policies.


> Local/Regional Publications

Local and regional publications are a great place to advertise your information. Connections with local and regional publications are a great asset. Once these connections have been made, submitting material may be as easy as calling someone up and relaying the information directly to them. Consider contributing your information to company newsletters, local or union newspapers, regional or organization publications and industry-specific publications.



Getting to the databases




 = The three databases are in one file on a single disk that was mailed (with this Guide) to each District, Marine Safety Office and Coast Guard Headquarters M office. Each location received at least one disk. If you cannot locate a disk, or if you have not yet received Standard Workstation III, contact G-MSE-1 (Human Element and Ship Design/PTP Coordination Staff) at 202-267-2997 for a new disk or a disk that can be used on Standard Workstation II. The databases can also be found on the Coast Guard Intranet site:

http://cgweb.hsc.comdt.uscg.mil/g-m_web/g-ms/mse/ptp/ptpmain.htm




The databases are in Microsoft Access format. An ASCII text file accompanies the database. It's called **Read Me First**. This document contains the detailed instructions on how to use the Access database.




 **1: HQ M Divisions** can be used to find specific office information: resources, expertise, products and responsibilities.



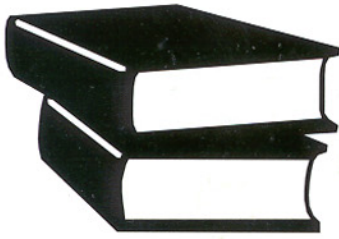
 **2: Media** provides the contact and audience information for many of the magazines in the maritime industries.



 **3: PTP References** is a bibliographic database containing information on human element and safety issues, as well as records relating to the development of PTP. Copies of the items can be requested from the office holding the reference.



COMMUNICATIONS CHECKLIST



- Have a goal
- State your purpose
- Find partners
- Define your audience
- Determine your messages
- Decide how to promote your information
- Research/collect information



- Review reasons for doing this activity
- Determine appropriate materials
- Examine the production requirements
- Format information
- Distribute draft material
- Finalize material



- Provide a point of contact
- Develop promotional materials
- Pass out materials
- Publicize your activity



- Provide list of materials available
- Provide copies of material
- Track the path of your activity
- Identify possible next steps
- Look into opportunities that build off your activity

For more information on PTP:

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